I passed by the field of the lazy man,
And by the vineyard of the man without sense;
And behold; all of it was grown over with thorns,
And its surface was covered with weeds,
And its stone-wall was broken down.
Then I perceived
And set my mind to consider it
I saw
And received the lesson (discipline)

2 Pet. 1 10
Deut 11 14.
Gal. 6 9 L
1 Cor. 15 58 L
1 Heb. 11 6

Get a little sleep
a little slumber
a little folding of the hands to lie down (relax)
So cometh thy poverty as one marching
And thy want as an armed man.

Prov. 26 16 The slothful is wiser in his own conceit than seven men who can render a reason.

Pr. 20 4 The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest and have nothing.

Prov. 18 9 He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.

Pro. 12[24] / the hand of the diligent shall bear rule:
but the slothful shall be under tribute.

Prov. 6[6-8] Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider
her ways, and be wise.

Prov. 10[4] He becometh poor that dealeth with
a slack hand.

Eccl. 10[18] By much slothfulness the building
decayeth and thru idleness of the
hands the house droppeth thru.

## Industry.

Prov. 12[11] He that tilleth his land shall be
satisfied with bread.

above 12[24]
13[4] the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.

21[5] The thots of the diligent tend only to plenteousness
but of every one that is hasty only to want.

Rom. 12[11] "in diligence not slothful."

1 Tim. 4[7-8]

# The Lazy Man's Lion.

In the book of Proverbs is this verse: "The sluggard saith, There is a lion without; I shall be slain in the street." This means that a lazy man did not wish to go to work, and so pretended that there was a lion in the street, and offered as an excuse for not going to work that the lion in the street would kill him if he went out.

It is a fact that every lazy boy and every indolent girl has a lion, that is, some excuse for not doing what is asked. A daughter is told to do her piano practicing and exclaims: "Oh, I can't! It is so cold in the parlor" (lazy man's lion). A son is asked to run to the store on an errand and answers that his shoe hurts his foot when he walks (lazy man's lion). On Sunday morning he cannot go to church because it is rainy (lazy man's lion). He cannot study his lessons because his eyes hurt him (lazy man's lion). She cannot eat the crusts of her bread because her gums are sore (lazy man's lion). She cannot get up in time for breakfast because her throat pains her (lazy man's lion).

Look out for the lazy man's lion, that foolish excuse for not doing what we should do!—*Rev. E. H. Byington, in Congregationalist.*

The Faithful Witness
Prov. 14 1 30-35

Letters
Greetings
Farewell

TEXT:-Prov.24:30-34.

The Field of the Slothful.

I went by the field of the slothful,
And by the vineyard of the man void of understanding;
And, lo, it was all grown over with thorns,
The face thereof was covered with weeds,
And the stone wall thereof was broken down.

Then I beheld(perceived)
And set my mind to consider it:
I saw and lay hold of the lesson:

Yet a little sleep,
A little slumber,
A little folding of the hands to lie down--
So shall thy poverty come as one marching,
And thy want as an armed man.

THEME:- The Neglect of the Spiritual Life and the Consequences.

INTRO:-Concerning a Neglected State of Things in General.

Our text pictures to us the Man of Wisdom plucking from a passing moment its measure of knowledge and understanding. Along his appointed way he ~~happens to~~ passes by a field and vineyard whose appearance attracts his attention. One glance at the place gives him its history. The fact that it was all grown over with thorns and weeds and that its wall was broken down tells him at once who and what the owner is---a slothful man! Nor does this wise man have to turn aside from his way or stop ~~in his way~~ in order to lay hold of the lesson that it contained for him. I can see this man of understanding as he speaks the words,"Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to lie down-- so shall thy poverty come as one marching, and thy want as an armed man", quicken his pace and center his attention more closely upon the task that was before him lest the armed man of poverty should march ~~down~~ upon him and turn his fields to a desolation and a waste.

Before we begin to consider the object-lesson before us with reference to our spiritual life let me say a few words about a neglected state of things in general. Thistles and weeds and a broken down wall give evidence of neglect brot about by slothfulness as the result of a little sleep, a little slumber, and a little folding of the hands to lie down. <Idleness is not only the devil's workshop, but is the mother of nearly all our vices and is herself the most subtle and hidden and vicious of them all. ~~the~~ the GRAVE of the living man.> J.G.Holland writes,"The idle man stands outside of God's plan, outside of the ordained scheme of things ; and the truest self-respect, the noblest independence, and the most genuine dignity, are not to be found there." The several varieties of idleness can be classified into two groups, the inactive and the active.

Inactivity is idleness. The great philosopher Seneca said in his day,"In the distribution of human life, we find that a great part of it passes away in evil-doing; a greater yet in doing just nothing at all: and effect-

ually the whole in doing things beside our business." I make bold to say that Seneca's statement holds good today. Yes, we spend a considerable portion of our time in doing nothing at all. We pay no attention to an idle moment here and to a wasted five minutes there or to an occasional hour spent in doing worse than nothing. We call them "spare moments",or"moments of leisure", or "intervals of rest". We regard these "scraps of time" as of no value whatever and look upon them much as we would upon a pile of iron-scraps. The bits of iron, however, when melted into one mass out of which needles or knives or pots and kettles are made, become of great value. It is the same with spare moments. By themselves they are of no use whatever but join them together in the carrying out of some definite purpose, the study of some book or the mastery of some art or instrument of music or the performing of some definite service, and the desert area of time will be reclaimed and made to yield a rich harvest.

The idleness that is active is of two kinds. One is the doing of things that are worthless in themselves. A man will spend hours reading the news-paper, filling his mind on a lot of stuff that is but half true and which inflames the mind with degrading and sensational "news". A woman will read into the wee hours of the morning a trashy novel which poisons her mind and unfits her for the practical duties of life. Or together they will go to some gaudy show to be entertained in a spectacular and sensational way. Much of the "doings"of society represent a great deal of time utterly wasted. Fashion and Gossip and Pleasure are the three Fates which hold and unwind and cut off nearly all of our wasted time. One may be very busy apparently but in reality he may be the greatest of idlers. The other active idleness is the doing of things worth while in a half-hearted, bunglesome way which results either in leaving the work half done orelse in making a failure of it in the end. We are so busy and are doing so many things at once that we cannot take time to do any one thing thoroly. The high-schools complain of the grammar-grade graduates that they are not thoro in the grammar-grade work. The universities complain of the high-school graduates that they are not thoro in the high-school studies. The business world, and the industrial world, and the professional world complain for the lack of competent and efficient workers. Jumping from one thing to another in a butterfly fashion and not doing thoro, painstaking work are the causes of most failures in life. It is nothing short of idleness, a costly waste of time and energy and substance.

The habit of idleness in any of its forms results in terrible consequences. It incapacitates one for effectual and useful work. It reduces the power of concentration until only that which is new, and sensational and extraordinary can hold the attention. Likewise the habit undermines one's power of endurance. The work becomes too difficult, and the nervous system nearly breaks down under the strain and the drudgery of it all becomes unbearable. The brain-cells, like the muscles, grow flabby while the will turns into a jelly-fish. B.R.Haydon was right when he declared,"Nothing is difficult; it is only we who are indolent." It is sloth that makes things hard and impossible; and it is industry that overcomes difficulties and accomplishes the impossible. Proverbs 12:24 declares,"The hand of the diligent shall bear rule: but the slothful shall be under tribute." Another proverb says, "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold: therefore shall he beg in harvest and have nothing." And still another declares,"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster."

3.The Neglect of the Spiritual Life.

Let us now turn our gaze upon the field of the Church and upon the vineyard of its individual member, that we may observe their true condition. We shall have to give a closer scrutiny of them than did the wise man of old of the field and vineyard by which he passed. They were all covered over with thorns and weeds and their wall was broken down completely. But the church and its individual member present no such utter devastation and decay. Therefore we shall be compelled to exercise our keenest observation lest we pass over any evidence of neglect. But after all one need not look for long upon the church and its member before discovering an indication of neglect.

First let us consider the field of the Church. With all of our thousands of churches, ten thousands of well-trained ministers of the Gospel, millions of members, together forming a complex organization whose only and expert task it is to lead souls to Jesus Christ, we as a church of God have failed to reach the masses. In the United States alone there are over ~~seventy~~ sixty million people outside of the churches. By the side of this failure on the part of the Church another can clearly be seen. The church has failed thus far to christianize the civil, the municipal, the industrial, the commercial, the educational, and the social world!

Secondly, let us consider the vineyard of the individual church-member. ~~By church-member I do not mean~~ the ideal ~~member~~ but rather the average member ~~in the church~~. I make bold to say that he gives evidence of leading but a superficial Xn life. His character is not distinctly Xn as over against a non-Xn character. His conduct in the school, in the office, in the shop, in public, and in society ~~is not much different~~ from that of his non-Xn fellows. His Bible is surprisingly free from finger-marks on the inside while its covers are usually hidden for the dust that is settled upon them. What little praying he does is altogether in secret, so secret as to be hidden both from men and from God. The average church-member has no very deep conviction of sin and repentance and there is no strong love and gratitude to God in his heart such as overcame the sinful Mary while washing the feet of the Master with her tears. He is not fervently and steadfastly loyal to Jesus Christ as they were wont to be in the early days of Xty. Instead of giving himself and his all to the Lord as a true disciple of Christ is supposed to do, he does not even give the required tenth of the old covenant. His church and his spiritual life are not of vital concern to him. He has fallen so low as to imagine that when he helps support the church he has fulfilled the whole of his Xn obligation. Such expressions as "the Cross", "Sacrifice", "Service", and "unselfish Love" are meaningless to the average church-member of today.

The wise man of old not only saw the thorns in the field, and the weeds in the vineyard and the broken-down wall but, being a wise man, considered them. Now that we see evidences of neglect in the church and in the life of its average member let us, as wisely as we can, give it careful attention. The failure of the church to reach the masses can be accounted for partly by its failure to apply the Christ-principles of right-living to government, to business and industry, to learning and culture, and to society.

This lack of application is due largely to the preaching of but half of the Gospel. The church has been presenting to men a way of escape out of this sinful world into the Kingdom of God that is in another world from this one, but she has neglected to present to men the Kingdom of God that Christ brot from heaven to this world and which He announced as being "at hand" and which does concern our earthly living in every department of human activity.

4.The Neglect of the Spiritual Life.

The church has been engaged exclusively in saving souls for eternity as tho they were all alike, and as tho they were so many things to be sent somewhere. God never created any two things or any two persons alike.

Loyalty to Jesus Christ does not mean only the loving of God with all our hearts, with all our minds , and with all our souls, but it consists also of loving our neighbor as well. A truly Xn man is he who lives up to his relationship to God and to his relationship to his fellow men. Every human problem be it political, economic, or social, is a religious problem and the Church in neglecting to apply the Xn principles to the solution of any one of such problems is not doing her full Xn duty.

As we turn to consider the superficial Xn life of the average church member we find it difficult to determine the full cause of his deplorable condition. Some words of Christ from His parable of the Sower may help us. "Behold a sower went forth to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside and the birds came and devoured them. When any one heareth the word of the Kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one and snatcheth away that which hath been sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the wayside." The average churchmember lacks an adequate understanding of God's Word. He has failed to study it, to meditate upon it, and to think it out for himself. In short, he has failed to master the Word. And as a result, he has not been able to translate the Word of God into his own heart, and into his own character and conduct, and into his very life. In short, he has failed to let the Word of God master him. Quoting further from the parable, "and others fell upon the rocky places where they had not much earth: and straightway they sprang up because they had no deepness of earth: and when the sun was risen, they were scorched, and because they had no root, they withered away. And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for awhile; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway he stumbleth." The lack of root and of depth here referred to goes far to explain the superficiality of the church-member. in question. And without an adequate understanding of God's Word such lack is little to be wondered at. Another portion of the parable reads,"and others fell upon the thorns and the thorns grew up and choked them. And he that was sown among the thorns, this is he that heareth the word; and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful." Failing to become deeply rooted in God and in His Word the average churchmember is overgrown with the thorns of worldly cares and with the thistles of earthly allurements. His treasures consist more of earthly things which are subject to the ravages of moth and rust and robber than of spiritual things which are Life Eternal with God. And where his treasures are there is his heart also, thus proving himself to be guilty of trying to serve God and Mammon at the same time. And Jesus said," No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other."

From what has been said I do not wish you to think that I have come to the conclusion that the church is a failure and its avreage member is not sincerely trying to be a Xn inthe true sehse of the word. I have neither pronounced judgment upon the church and its membership nor do I intend to do

any such thing. I have simply observed that the church has neglected to reach the masses and to apply the Xn principles of right living to the whole of human life and activity; and that the average church-member is leading a a Xn life in but a superficial way to the neglect of his spiritual life. My object is to see the exact condition of the church and of its membership in order that I may lay hold of the lesson it has for me just as the man of wisedom saw the neglected condition of the field and vineyard and laid hold of the lesson it demonstrated to him. Andkfor our practical purpose the lessons are identical. The neglect is not necessarily in proportion to its consequences, but on the contrary just a little sloth may bring about an enormous loss. It is the little sleep, the little slumber, the little folding of the hands to lie down that makes it possible for poverty and want to march down upon us and make us to become their bondservant and slave. The following from Benjamin Franklin may help us to more ~~forcibly~~ realize the force of this lesson. "A little neglect may breed great mischief. For want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost; being overtaken and slain by the enemy; all for the want of a little care about a horse-shoe nail."

How sweet is the sleep that comes to us just after the alarm-clock strikes the time for us to be up and doing! And how sweet are those few minutes longer in bed when it is bitter cold! Charming music to our ears these words?....the song of the Sirens enticing men to a certain destruction! Sugar-coated poison that tastes deliciously but destroys maliciously! We Americans have the reputation of being a busy people. And so we are. But with all of our strenuous living and rushing activity we are to a great extent a lazy and a thotless people. In times of plenty we live in all possible comfort and ease, saving nothing for emergency in time of want. The working class of ~~this country~~ enjoy more luxuries and squander more money than that of any ~~other~~ other country. Ours is a time of plodding, plenty, and pleasure. -The church and its membership, suffering as they ~~are~~ do from a similar condition, must turn its indolence and neglect to industry and thotfulness. The evils that flourish in our midst and the indifference of the people towards the church and spiritual matters constitute the challenge to the Xn faith, and it is so formidable and threatening that there is need of all Xns putting on the whole armor of God and together in the unity and power of the Spirit to conquer the enemies of God and turn their weapons into plowshares for the tilling of God's Kingdom. "And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."

Let each one of us as members of the Church of Jesus Christ turn to his own neglect and take heed thereto. When I gave myself to the Lord, did I surrender all or did I withhold some little thing that I was unwilling to give up? Very frequently it is just the little neglect at the time of our conversion that prevents our growing in the spiritual life. Does my prayer-life represent a constant and intimate communion with God? Such communion is indespensible to the practice of the presence of God in our lives. The conception of a far-away God is less the product of a misguided theology than of a failure to keep in touch with the Heavenly Father thru prayer which is the language spoken between man and his Maker. Just a little neglect in our prayer-life cuts into the very heart of our Xn living for prayer is the heart of Xn activity. Am I increasing my understanding of God's Word? An affirmative answer implies on my part a daily and systematic study of the Scriptures, in-

volving the exercise of deep thinking and prayerful meditating. In no other way can I find out so clearly the will of my Father in Heaven with reference to my life and conduct, and without knowing my Father's will how can I expect to obey him? Am I letting the light of Christ within me shine forth unto men for a lamp unto their feet and a light along their pathway of life? Then I am fitted for such shining and am willing to so shine. But if not, then I am hiding God's lamp within me under a bushel. Am I actually growing in grace and in the wisdom and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ? Then I must be adding to my faith virtue, knowledge, self-control, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love. And if I am not adding these things to my faith, then I am still blind and neglectful of my first cleansing from sin. Is Jesus Christ the sum-total of my life? If so, there is nothing within me but that is X-like. Is the will of God and the Master's business my will and business? All things then that I do must be working together in obedience to this highest aim of my life.

In the answering of these questions, each one alone before God, let us be honest enough to acknowledge any neglect on our part. And let us be obedient unto repentance, determined that from henceforth let us use every effort in our power to make ourselves more consistent in our Xn living and more fruitful in the servive of Jesus Christ. May we take for ourself Paul's advice to the Corinthians,"be ye stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain." Also Paul's words to Timothy;"And exercise thyself unto godliness; for bodily exercise is profitable for a little; but godliness is frofitable for all things, having promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come. Faithful is this saying and worthy of all acceptation. For to this end we labor and strive,because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, specially of them that believe."